

As however this pandemonium does not bring the elected bridegroom, the two check their appeals, dry their tears, rearrange their plumage and soon the bride emerges from the tent arrayed in all the gorgeous splendor of the most barbaric taste. Every article of her apparel, petticoats, skirt, leggins, moccasins are embroidered with bead work, very showy if not very elegant. On her shoulders is a rich blanke', fringed with little silver bells; on her head an immense stove-pipe hat, covered with silver paper and surmounted by three big plumes. The bride's father in gala costume appears now, holding a loaded gun, but he is not going to kill anybody. Her mother holds a horse richly caparisoned for the young amazon to mount.

In the meanwhile, her friends and relatives dispose themselves in a long line across the prairie, about five hundred feet from the fair or rather dusky rider; all on foot and in an attitude of breathless expectations, as if waiting for a signal. As the bride starts her horse toward the crowd, her father raises his gun, shoots over her head and the whole gang sets immediately on a wild run, each trying with all its might to overtake the girl and catch her horse's bridle, for to such the steed is given as a present. Well, on this occasion it turned out that the lucky winner was a squaw of no less than fifty years. Three young braves were first in advance of her, but the foremost fell to the ground and the two others tumbled over him, and before they were on their feet again, old Wisdom had passed them and grappled the horse's bridle amidst the frantic acclamations of the lookers on.

The bride now dismounts, but her feet are not to touch the ground. A double blanket is spread on the grass like a carpet; she now jumps on it, squats down with her legs crossed (Indian fashion), and four buxom matrons

seizing each a corner, twist the blanket and put it over their shoulder and thus carry it with its contents like a bundle of old clothes. The three plumes on the stove-pipe hat meanwhile are waving at each step, and the poor girl cutting the queerest comical figure you ever saw.

At the end of the camp there is a tent open on one side, the canvas having been raised to give free entrance to the four Indian women. Here they deposit their burden, the side of tent is immediately lowered and a complete change of toilet is the next farce in the drama.

So far nothing has been seen of the prospective husband. Where is he? Nobody can tell. He must hide himself till this, the psychological moment, when the public crier calls out three times for him to come forth. The first time the crier proclaims the bride's name, her age, her parentage, her good points adding that she must be married this very day to young Joe Little-Bear; again he calls on him to come forth; a second proclamation; at the third summation the wily old child of the forest joins this clause: "She is to be married this very instant to the brave Little-Bear, should he fail to appear she'll be given to another." This fetches the young Grizzlie. Behold him, "the beautiful, the free," in all the glory of his painting and his feathers, his light footsteps hardly sounding on the earth, his raven locks of hair streaming to the wind over his gaudy blanket. The sides of the tent are lifted and disclose his bride seated on a rug, bare-headed, awaiting him. Without a word he sits in front of her, some food is brought in a wooden plate with two spoons. They both eat out of this plate and are henceforth considered as man and wife.

To tell the truth, all the barbaric display of this performance amused me intensely then, but on second thought